

Puget Sound Partnership is seeking information about projects that may be suitable for use in the pilot in-lieu-fee program.

The Puget Sound Partnership is seeking information about projects suitable for its Pilot In-Lieu-Fee (ILF) Mitigation Program. The Partnership's ILF Program intends to mitigate for impacts to aquatic and other resources. However, the pilot program will focus primarily on wetlands. The pilot areas include the following select watersheds in Pierce and Thurston Counties that drain into Puget Sound:

Pierce – WRIA 10 (Puyallup/White), WRIA 11 (Nisqually), WRIA 12 (Chambers-Clover)
Thurston – WRIA 11 (Nisqually) and WRIA 13 (Deschutes)

Projects in WRIA 10 and WRIA 13 will be prioritized over others.

The Washington State Legislature allocated approximately \$4 million dollars to develop pilot mitigation projects prior to the collection of mitigation fees. This pre-capitalization money will help ensure no net loss of ecological function as the ILF program is being established. The Partnership intends to select a pilot project in each pilot county. However this will be determined by the caliber and cost of the projects submitted for consideration. The goal is to obligate this money by June 30, 2010.

For each proposed project, please demonstrate consistency with the following conditions:

1. Projects are “shovel ready” (i.e., land is acquired, design is complete, necessary permits have been obtained, etc.). Projects that are ready to proceed will be prioritized over those that are not.
2. The project must be proposed by a government entity (e.g., tribal, county, city, etc.) willing and capable of signing an Interagency Agreement by June 30, 2010. Other interested parties must work with a government entity willing to take the lead on project submittal.
3. The proposed project must involve wetland area (re-establishment, rehabilitation, creation, enhancement, preservation, or some combination).
4. The proposed project must be within an area (WRIA) that needs wetland mitigation (i.e., experiencing development pressure, or future development is known or highly likely).

Projects submitted for consideration will be reviewed and scored by a team comprised of representatives from at least the following entities: the Partnership, the Department of Ecology, and the Corps of Engineers. We strongly encourage parties interested in submitting projects for consideration to read the following interagency site selection guidance document, available on-line at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0906032.html>

Hruby, T., K. Harper, and S. Stanley (2009). Selecting Wetland Mitigation Sites Using a Watershed Approach. Washington State Department of Ecology Publication #09-06-032.

Scoring will be based on how well projects meet the draft criteria¹ listed below, which are taken directly or adapted from the referenced document:

1. Is the site/project area identified as a priority for restoration in a watershed characterization, watershed plan, salmon recovery 3-year work plan, etc.? If yes, please explain and cite the plan.
2. Will the project improve functions that have been identified as limiting or prioritized as goals within the watershed? If yes, please explain and cite the goal(s) and the plan.
3. Do the activities proposed for the site have the potential to contribute to the restoration or protection of watershed processes? If yes, please explain.
 - a. Does the site have constraints that limit its functions?
 - b. Can any of the constraints on the site be removed?
 - c. Can all of the constraints on the site be removed?
 - d. If only some of the constraints can be removed, prioritize which will be addressed.
4. Explain the potential of the proposed activities to successfully contribute to a gain in functions on the site. What functions would be improved?
5. Will the mitigation activities result in a wetland of the appropriate hydrogeomorphic (HGM) class in that landscape setting?
6. Will the primary source of water to the mitigation site be appropriate for the HGM class?
7. Will the site have an adequate supply of water to maintain a wetland without engineering the delivery of water that requires long-term control or maintenance? Please describe the source of water.
8. Will the mitigation activities maintain hydric soils, if they exist, at the site?
9. Can the mitigation be designed to control aggressive plant species? If yes, please explain.
10. Will the mitigation-receiving site have appropriate buffers?
11. Is there (will there be) a corridor connecting the mitigation receiving site to other habitat area(s)?

¹ The criteria are still being developed and reviewed. However, the basic information will remain the same. We will discuss the criteria and the proposed system for scoring proposals at the PSP ILF Site Selection Stakeholders Meeting on Wednesday, April 28, 2010.

In addition, please include some basic information about the site and the proposed project, such as:

- A. Proposed project costs – Include a budget for acquisition, design, and construction.
- B. Does the project need any permits (e.g., local, state, federal, etc.)?
- C. Hydrologic conditions, soil characteristics, flora, and other physical, chemical, and biological characteristics.
- D. The size and location of the proposed site relative to hydrologic sources (including availability of water rights) and other ecological features.
- E. Compatibility with adjacent land uses (zoning) and watershed management plans.
- F. Reasonably foreseeable effects the proposed project will have on ecologically important aquatic or terrestrial resources (e.g., shallow sub-tidal habitat, mature forests), cultural sites, or habitat for federally- or state listed threatened or endangered species.

Please submit information about candidate projects by **Tuesday, April 27, 2010.**

Information about additional projects will be accepted after that date until final decisions have been made. We are looking for a one to two (1-2) page description that explains how the project meets or addresses the above criteria. Questions and project proposals should be directed to:

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